Peringala pakuthies from the Mavelikara Taluk. The total area of those eleven pakuthies is 75·62 square miles, and it would be more extensive than Parur taluk. Seven of those pakuthies already constituted a group forming the jurisdiction of the Krishnapuram Munsiff's Court, the Kayankulam Excise Range and the Stationary Magistrate. The new taluk would bring in an aggregate land revenue of Rs. 1,20,000; and, with the large number of public offices and institutions located in the town, there would be transactions to the extent of about Rs. 2 lakhs. There was formerly a Sub-Treasury at the place and the Sub-Magistrate was empowered to dispose of pokkuvaravu cases. For the above reasons, the Member requested that the above-said eleven pakuthies be constituted into a separate taluk and that the Stationary Magistrate's court at Karunagapalli be shifted to Kayankulam.

Dewan's reply.—The representation of the Member is noted.

17. Needs of Kanjirapalli.

Mr. Ittiavira Thomas (Member, Peermade Taluk) first urged the formation of a new taluk to be carved out of the present Peermade taluk and consisting of the six pakuthies of Punjar, Kanjirapalli North, Kanjirapalli South, Manimala, Cheruvalli and Chirakadavu. The taluk might be named after its headquarters, Kanjirapalli. The present Peermade taluk had a larger area than the Padmanabhapuram Division. The new Kanjirapalli taluk would measure 210·41 square miles and would be bigger than most taluks of the State. Peermade taluk was 50 miles in length and there were places in the taluk situated more than 30 miles from the head-quarters. The work in the Taluk Office was heavy and revenue cases from 1086 onwards were in arrears. The climatic difference between this group of six pakuthies in the plains and the remaining pakuthies on the hills was very great. The pakuthies on the high lands were inhabited by Europeans and labourers on the estates, while there was a native population on the low land pakuthies. In view of the long distances from the abovesaid pakuthies to the head-quarters and the difficulties and cost of journeys to it, people who had to go to the head-quarters of the present taluk to transact business were put to great privations and hardships. The cost of the formation of a new taluk would not exceed Rs. 5,000 a year. The Kanjirapalli Munsiff could be divested of his Magisterial work, the Mundakayam Magistrate's Court abolished, and the Tahsildar of the new taluk invested with First Class Magisterial powers. A large amount could thus be saved. The expeditious disposal of applications for the registry of land would also bring in additional revenue to Government. The difficulties experienced by the offices, &c., at Kanjirapalli could also be lightened by the location of a Taluk Office and Sub-Treasury at Kanjirapalli. The question of the formation of a new taluk had been brought forward at the past four sessions of the Assembly and Government last year admitted the reasonableness of the request.

The Member next referred to the fact that the country had annually to import large quantities of paddy and it suffered considerably during the last five years by its inability to raise its own food-stuffs. Though there had been much talk for some time past about the necessity of extending paddy cultivation, no serious effort had been made to extend the area under paddy in the State. On the other hand, the policy of Government would appear to be designed to thwart people who were venturesome enough to open up new sources of food supply. The history of the reclamation of the backwater area would amply prove the statement. In the eastern districts, the area under paddy cultivation had actually diminished during the past few years. The policy of Government in extending the area of reserved forests had been the chief contributory cause of this state of things. A vast extent of hill tract which was under periodical paddy cultivation and a large number of marshy areas lying in the midst of these hill districts and regularly used for growing paddy had been declared part of the reserved forests of the country and thus placed beyond the reach of the people. And what little land remained outside the reserved forests, or was subsequently disafforested had been taken up mainly by European planters for the cultivation of tea, rubber and other industrial crops. A rough calculation would show that nearly 20,000 acres of land formerly used for growing food crops had now been converted into tea, rubber and other estates in the Peermade taluk alone. The areas in which cherikal cultivation was

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

going on in the past did not contain valuable tree-growth and they might, with advantage to the State and benefit to the people, be assigned on suitable terms and conditions for paddy cultivation. The pressure on land, which was now great, especially in the western pakuthies of the taluk, would be relieved thereby. The Member suggested that the portion of the Rani Reserve lying north of Azhuthayar might be disafforested and made available to the people under such conditions and safeguards as would ensure their equitable distribution and proper utilisation. The tract lay close to the inhabited portion of the Kanjirapalli and Manimala pakuthies and is surrounded on the north, west and east by cultivated lands. Further, it was devoid of tree-growth of any value and was eminently suited for paddy cultivation. The Member suggested the appointment of a Committee consisting of the Devicolam Commissioner, the Director of Agriculture, the Conservator of Forests and two or three non-official gentlemen to investigate the matter and report to Government.

Dewan's reply.—I must say that there is a good deal of force in the arguments brought forward in support of the first proposition. But the question will have to be investigated carefully before a final decision can be arrived at. Whether Peermade should be split up into two taluks or whether, with a readjustment without increasing the number of taluks, we can separate the plain pakuthies from the hill pakuthies of the taluk,—these are questions which have to be looked into carefully. All that I can tell Mr. Thomas now is that I shall look into the question very carefully.

In regard to the creation of additional facilities for paddy cultivation, I am not prepared to dogmatise to the same extent as Mr. Thomas has done. He says that forest conservancy has been pushed to the detriment of other interests. I am told, that for the last 3 or 4 years, there has been no additional conservation worth the name. On the contrary a large area has been disafforested and made available for cultivation. In regard to Rani, I am told that all large dips where paddy cultivation can be carried on profitably have already been thrown out for cultivation ; there may still be within the reserves small swamps where paddy can be grown, but everybody will concede that the disafforestation of such small areas within reserves is altogether detrimental to forest interests. As for cherikkal cultivation to which Mr. Thomas referred, this is done on the slopes by removing tree-growth. Whether encouragement should be given to this form of cultivation is a matter for Government to consider. As regards the last representation that a Committee should be constituted to go into the question as to whether it is feasible to throw open additional areas from the Rani reserve for paddy cultivation, I may say that this will receive my attention.

18. Shifting of the Division Cutcherry from Kottayam and its location in any of the central taluks of the Division.

Mr. Vasudevar Trivikramar Nambutiri (Member, Jenmi, Kottayam Division) pointed out that the head-quarters of a Division should be at a place easily accessible to the majority of the taluks in that Division. Kottayam was conveniently situated for the three neighbouring taluks; but, in respect of the seven northern taluks, the location was not suitable as the journey involved delay, hardship and loss. Alwaye deserved to be the seat of the Dewan Peishkar for the following reasons:—

(i) Alwaye is more easily accessible from the seven taluks out of the eleven which constitute the Division.

(ii) Large sums of money will have to be spent by Government for land compensation for a site for the Division Cutcherry at Kottayam, as the price of land has risen high. At Alwaye, an area of three acres adjoining the Railway Station acquired in the past for the use of the Excise department is lying idle and may be utilised for building the Division Cutcherry. With less than the cost of the site and building at Kottayam, the Division Cutcherry and even quarters for the Peishkar and other officers can be erected at Alwaye.

(iii) Kottayam is becoming more and more crowded, and the cost of living in the town has considerably increased.

(iv) Alwaye is a sanitarium and is in every way healthier and better.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly